

**Mission:**

To protect, promote & improve the health of all people in Florida through integrated state, county & community efforts.



**Rick Scott**  
Governor

**John H. Armstrong, MD, FACS**  
State Surgeon General & Secretary

**Vision:** To be the Healthiest State in the Nation

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

August 21, 2013

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**RABIES ALERT ISSUED FOR SEMINOLE COUNTY**

**SANFORD** – The Florida Department of Health in Seminole County is extending a rabies alert originally issued last month, this time for the Casselberry area. The extension of the alert is in response to a raccoon which tested positive in the area during the past week; however, rabies activity has been higher than usual throughout the county since the beginning of the year. The initial alert was issued July 11, 2013 after a bobcat tested positive for rabies; a week later a raccoon also tested positive.

Residents and visitors in Seminole County should be aware that rabies is present in the wild animal population, and domestic animals are at risk if not vaccinated. The public is asked to maintain a heightened awareness that rabies is active in Seminole County. Alerts are designed to increase awareness to the public. This alert should not give a false sense of security to areas that have not been named as under this alert. This rabies alert is for 60 days.

An animal with rabies could infect other wild animals or domestic animals that have not been vaccinated against rabies. All domestic animals should be vaccinated against rabies and all wildlife contact should be avoided, particularly raccoons, bats, foxes, skunks, otters, bobcats and coyotes.

The following advice is issued:

- All pets should have current rabies immunizations.
- Secure outside garbage in covered containers to avoid attracting wild animals.
- Do not leave pet food outside. This also attracts other animals.
- Avoid contact with **all** wildlife, especially raccoons, bats, and foxes.
- For questions regarding the health of an animal, contact a veterinarian.
- Veterinarian staff and animal control staff should be alert for animals encountered with signs suspicious for rabies and use appropriate precautions, especially when working with unvaccinated animals.
- If bitten or scratched by a suspected rabid animal, wash the wound immediately with soap and water, seek medical attention, and promptly report the incident to Seminole County Animal Services 407-665-5201.
- Rabies is preventable when treatment is provided in a timely manner.
- No animal is too young to have rabies.
- For general questions pertaining to animals, Seminole County Animal Control.

Rabies is a disease of the nervous system that can cause paralysis and is fatal to warm blooded animals and humans. The virus is spread through saliva, and humans may become infected through a

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[www.seminolecohealth.com](http://www.seminolecohealth.com)

**www.FloridasHealth.com**

TWITTER: HealthyFLA  
FACEBOOK: FLDepartmentofHealth  
YOUTUBE: fldoh

bite wound, scratch or exposure of a fresh cut to saliva of a rabid animal. The only treatment for human exposure to rabies is rabies specific immune globulin and rabies immunization. Appropriate treatment started soon after the exposure, will protect an exposed person from the disease.

For more information on rabies, visit the DOH website at [doh.state.fl.us/Environment/medicine/rabies/rabies-index.html](http://doh.state.fl.us/Environment/medicine/rabies/rabies-index.html) or the CDC website at [www.cdc.gov/ncidod/dvrd/rabies](http://www.cdc.gov/ncidod/dvrd/rabies).

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